

TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
DATE 3/19/2014

**Committee Members Present:** Paul DeFazio, Larry Thomas, Kevin Powers, Heidi Krockta, Cal Calnan, Sue Dring, Thom Freeman, Patrick Mosesso, John Chlebek

**Members Absent:** Larry Stern, Tracey Metivier, Jeff Anderson

**Others Present:** Sharon Wason, Bill Grieder, John Gray, Jr., Steve Udden, Randy Scollins, Dick Heydecker, Ginny Coppola

Notes taken by: Kristin Meehan Papianou

The meeting was brought to order at 7:00PM by Paul DeFazio, Chairman. Tonight we've got representatives of the South Eastern Regional School to review the budget.

**7:05PM – Planning Board – Sharon Wason and Bill Grieder** – they had a posting issue for the hearings which impacts all of the articles. They've changed some plans and added a meeting for 4/3 and 4/10. They are going to be sending post cards to all the scenic road people and put another ad out. They've gotten notes from the Ad Comm and the Board of Selectmen with their concerns and they will bring those to public hearing. They will do one presentation and then spend most of the time doing Q&A for the residents. Planning Board apologized for their oversight and Sharon advised that Ad Comm will have the report from them the following morning. Ad Comm and Planning Board discussed voting schedule and opportunities to work through the issue.

**7:15PM – South Eastern Regionals School** – Mark Morris, School Position Manager at South Eastern Regional and Steve Udden. Mark handed out the Certified Budget FY2015 and referenced page 3, FY15 Budget Summary including the Foundation Budget, the Transportation of Students and Other Expenditures. Discussion of the school environment and the renovations as well as a solar project that is underway. Discussion of the budget which is up 1.7% over prior year – they operate at the foundation level.

Foxboro's enrollment is 1.4% of their total enrollment (19 students for FY15). That results in an assessment of \$246,996. This is an increase over last year because the number of Foxboro students went up.

Larry Thomas commented on the low rate of increase. Mark said they didn't cut any employees but they did look at machinery requests. He also said that through the renovation project they are now saving money on maintenance and energy costs.

Thom Freeman asked if there is a fixed cost base line or is it per student. Mark advised that the state has a formula based on the town's wealth. They use that to determine how much the town can afford to pay per student. He said that Brockton pays about \$3000 per student. Thom asked if proximity or transportation is weighted. Mark said it is not. They are required to provide transportation to all but 4 students (who are within a half mile of the school). He also advised that Regional Transportation is supposed to be paid by the state but it's never been funded.

Steve Udden discussed the student body make up and the MCAS scores which are on the rise. Mark advised that 97% of their students do graduate. Discussion of some of the programs including robotics, technology, HVAC, biomechanical and others. Discussion of the level of engagement of the students and the faculty.

Thom asked if the budget is separate from any evening or adult education. Mark answered that it is a separate entity. Discussion of student assistance in project and maintenance work at the school and on the facilities.

Larry Thomas asked about MCAS. Steve said that they are in the bottom third, but moving toward the top of that segment. Mark said that they do have virtual high school now and have also implemented after school activities including homework club, Spanish club, martial arts. They have over 80% of the kids staying. Larry Thomas asked how they compare to other Regional Technical Schools. Steve Udden said that they are the envy of many other Tech schools in the area.

Discussion of a request to establish a stabilization fund and the vote needed to make that happen. Discussion of whether the towns have ever refused to pay the assessment. Randy said that 14 or 15 years ago they were looking for a substantial increase and there were a number of towns who were not in support of the increase. Since that time, though, that hasn't been the case at all. They live within the minimum requirement. Discussion that the budget requires a two thirds affirmative vote to pass. Each community is one vote regardless of the size of the community or their student representation at the school.

Mark advised that they do have a wait list of about 600 students and they have a blind admission policy. Thom asked what percentage of students stay for four years. Mark said that the majority who leave, leave within the first year. Discussion of the use of Chrome Books and the reduced need for computer labs. The kids get the Chrome Books and get to keep them when they graduate. They also offer optional insurance.

**7:55PM Dick Heydecker** said that he's been involved with the Voc Tech and that they have an excellent reputation among the other Voc Techs. Dick said that these school are producing journey men in the trades as they graduate. They are much more skilled. The trades and the construction industry has benefited from it. The only criticism over the years is that the kids might not get the specialization that they might have wanted.

**8:00PM – Operating Budget–** Randy Scollins offered to answer any questions.

- **Department 122** Selectmen – no comment / question
- **Department 123** Administration – no comment
- **Department 127** Human Resources – no comment
- **Department 130** Finance – no comment
- **Department 141** Ad Comm – no comment
- **Department 142** Reserve Fund – No comment
- **Department 151** Legal – Larry Thomas asked if this is a realistic number. Randy said that he thinks it is. Bob Cutler increased it by \$30,000 after looking at the trend for reserve fund transfers. John Gray, Jr. asked if that includes retainers. Randy said that everyone is paid on an hourly rate.
- **Department 156** Geographic Information Systems (GIS) – Heidi asked if this is for the Water Department. Randy advised that the Water Department is championing this now. Randy expects this number to go up over time but right now it's in maintenance mode.
- **Department 161** Town Clerk – no comment
- **Department 162** Election and Registration – no comment
- **Department 171** Conservation – Randy discussed the request to increase the expense budget by \$10k in order to provide more maintenance to 89 North Street. Randy and Bob Cutler had asked them to come back with a more comprehensive approach. They did that and came back with a request for \$62,000. That amount was reviewed and the determination was made that \$16,500 should come from capital along with the \$24,000 rental income.
- **Department – 175** Planning Board. Larry Thomas asked if this includes the additional part time staff. Randy said that it does – it's 19 hours with no benefits. Discussion of some of the Planning Board articles and some concerns that Roger Hill has expressed. Heidi suggested that Roger Hill and the Planning Board come in for a more complete discussion. Discussion of the Complete Streets Article.
- **Department 176** Appeals Board – no comments
- **Department 192** Municipal Building – Randy said that the reason for the increase here is that they put a place holder in for possible lease related costs. He said that this budget will be reduced if the RFP isn't successful. Larry Thomas said that Ad Comm is going to have to vote on the budget before they will have that determination. Randy said that they could make a recommendation on Town Meeting Floor. Dick Heydecker discussed the budget last year was \$20,000 and this year it's \$50,000. He asked what that increase was for. Randy said that it's for increased maintenance for Town Hall.
- **Department 210** Police – Larry Thomas asked if this includes on new officer. Randy said it's not an add, no change to head count. It's a changing of some positions.
- **Department 220** Fire – Pau DeFazio asked if we're likely to see a contract. Randy Scollins said that he doubts we'd see a fire contract for Town Meeting. Larry Thomas asked about fire overtime. Randy said that all aspects of compensation is blended in the salary line.
- **Department 230** – Central Dispatch –no comments

- **Department 235** Public Safety Building – no comments
- **Department 241** Inspection – no comments
- **Department 292** Animal Control – no comments
- **Department 300** Foxboro Public Schools – Sue Dring said that the figure is higher than it was in their book and asked why. Randy said that the figure in the book was the first vote on budget but then they have more discussion. The one change that was made was that the “step” or “lane” changes which is all salary. Paul asked what the staffing changes were. It’s the Health teacher and a custodian. The custodian is for the middle school. Dick Heydecker revisited the declining enrollment and his comment that there have been no cuts but the additions of full time equivalents. Dick suggests that there should have been some offsets for staffing to student ratios. He’s not suggesting cuts but he does think we need a long range plan for what they intend to do for staffing in light of declining enrollment.
- **Department 390** South Eastern Regional – no comments
- **Department 410** Public Works – Salaries, Expenses and Capital Outlay – Dick Heydecker asked about the new overtime item for costs that are included in the public sector general contracts. Dick’s position is that these shouldn’t be over time items.
- **Department 411** Solid Waste, Landfill – Randy said that this will be the first year that we are not operating the Solid Waste Operating Fund because the trash program is all direct billed to customers. Heidi asked if this includes trash pick-up at the municipal buildings. Randy said that currently that’s provided by Russell Disposal but that was based on their expectation that they would have more business here in Town. It’s unlikely that they will continue when the contract is over and then we may see an additional cost here. This budget is for hazardous waste and other line items.
- **Department 423** Snow and Ice – no comments
- **Department 424** – Street Lighting no comments
- **Department 433** – Solid Waste Landfill
- **Department 434** - Solid Waste Enterprise collection
- **Department 460** – Sewer Enterprise – no comments
- **Department 510** - Board of Health no comments
- **Department 520** - Health Agencies – no comments
- **Department 541** – Counsel on Aging and Human Services – they had requested some additional hours. Similar to conservation, this one is ripe for discussion. Larry Thomas asked if we could vote the higher number.
- **Department 543 Veterans** – Salary and Expenses – change is that Mike Johns is no longer responsible for multiple towns.
- **Department 610 Library** – Salary, Expenses and Capital outlay – The Sunday hours are in this number and will be funded from other sources.
- **Department 630** – Recreation Department – Randy said that there is still some discussion on the capital outlay to repair the tennis courts. The discussion is about whether the Town should help fund the repair or whether the Recreation Department should be fully self-supporting through its own revenues. Paul advised that Debbie and Heather were invited to come in to talk about

this next week and they declined to do so because they've already answered this. Debbie suggested that any other questions should go through the liaisons. Kevin Powers will reach out to Debbie and Heather to talk about the tennis court funding and will advise the Ad Comm. Kevin Powers said that he spoke with Debbie and that the concern of the Recreation Department was that the nature of the questions was unclear for them. Debbie and Heather wanted to be sure that they could prepare for questions. Kevin said that he believes they will be willing to come in two weeks from tonight. Sue Dring asked Randy what would happen if we didn't vote for it. Randy discussed other funding sources available to the Recreation Department. Discussion of the Recreation Department's revolving fund and who the funds belong to. Discussion of the Turf Field. Randy advised that the School department is going to manage a separate fund for rental costs associated with that field to be used for the field maintenance, so that won't be managed by the Rec Dept.

- **Department 691** – Historical Commission – Randy discussed the work that this volunteer group has done to maintain the property. Thom asked if there was any news on the grant they applied for. Kevin Powers said that their monthly meeting is next week.
- **Department 710** Debt Principal – no comment
- **Department 751** Debt Interest – no comment
- **Department 760** Debt issuance and expenses – no comment

**9:12PM** Kevin Powers left the meeting.

- **Department 911** Pensions and Retirement – Larry Thomas asked what the 20% increase is. Randy said that is the actual assessment by Norfolk County. The reason for the increase is that Norfolk County is taking a more aggressive approach to their funding schedule.
- **Department 913** Workers Compensation – Rand advised this is premium based through a non-profit entity.
- **Department 914** Unemployment – Randy advised that for this we hold the risk, we are self-insured.
- **Department 915** Group Health and Life Insurance – Thom asked how many employees this covers. Randy advised it's approximately 600. Randy has assumed a 7% increase in our group insurance rates.
- **Department 945** General Insurance – Randy advised this is general liability, tort liability for all the municipal buildings. Also coverage for all the vehicles.

**9:25PM** Paul thanked Randy for his time. Randy handed out the Capital recommendation and said he'd go over it with Ad Comm whenever they like.

Paul discussed the voting schedule. Tracey sent out a tentative schedule because the voting has to be done by 4/9. There are two meetings between then and now. The final budget vote has to be sent to print by 4/16 and Ad Comm recommendations have to be sent to the newspaper by 4/23. Larry Thomas reminded Ad Comm that we never listen to something and vote on it in the same night. He advised that

the sign by-laws and liquor license articles have been removed from the warrant but there are still some complicated articles on there.

Paul asked if everyone looked at the minutes from 3/5. No changes or amendments.

Motion to accept the minutes of 3/5/14 as written brought by Larry Thomas. Seconded by Cal.

Vote: 6-0-1

**9:30** Motion to Adjourn by Thom Freeman. Seconded by Larry Thomas.

Vote: 7-0-0

Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting:

Vote:

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Signature of Chairperson

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Signature of Secretary